(iii) The exporters were further requested not to use the balance permits issued to them by the Board for export to Russia until they furnish landing proof for all the quantity for which proof of export had been submitted;

(iv) All the major ports and customs authorities have been requested by the Board not to allow any shipments to Russia without prior clearance from the Coffee Board. A list of pending permits along with exportwise details were also furnished to the port authorities.

(c) to (e). The Government of India is committed to check any illegal diversion of export consignments meant for Russia under the debt repayment route. In order to prevent such diversion, the following measures are being contemplated by the Government:-

(i) Exports through consignment sales by way of customs bonded warehouses.

(ii) Finalisation of Customs Agreement between Indian and Russia for cooperation in customs matters; and

(iii) Insistence on the Russian side for providing satisfactory proof of landing.

It is also been informed by the Coffee Board that henceforth the Board is stipulating on the permits as well as on the certificate of origin that the "Country of destination not changeable" to other than the country of destination for which the permit was issued. The Board has also made it mandatory that exporters shall furnish landing certificates with customs clearance certificates for all exports meant for Russia under the debt repayment route.

India Brand Equity Fund

4438. SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have finalised the Constitution of the Indian Brand Equity Fund; and

(b) if so, the details of its scope and the nature of activities of the said Fund?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b). The Trust Deed of India Brand Equity Fund (IBEF) has already been registered on 11.7.1996. The basic idea behind the setting up of the Fund is to develop a brand building export promotion strategy in order to achieve a quantum export jump in comparatively shorter time framework. The fund will work towards promotion of Indian brands and products in overseas markets.

The Fund will undertake international promotions to project India as a whole as well as broad production sectors, support sectoral as well as product group promotion within each sector, support particular brands which have achieved international quality and performance standards and support domestic awareness generation programmes directed at quality and high business ethics.

Heavy Industries Projects

4439. SHRI D.S.A. SIVAPRAKASAM: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to set up heavy industries in the States in near future; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the location thereof, Statewise?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) There is no proposal to set up heavy industries in the public sector in the States at the present.

(b) Does not arise.

Strike/Agitation made by Employees of MPEDA

4440. SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether there was any strike/agitation by the employees of Marine Product Export Development Authority, Cochin recently;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to redress the grievances of the employees?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) to (c). Members of the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) Officers' Association and the MPEDA Staff Association have been agitating against the reported move to post an officer from services other than MPEDA as the resident Director in the Trade Promotion Office of MPEDA in New York. They have been wanting the officers from MPEDA may be selected for this post as well as for the post of director which will be falling vacant shortly. No final decision has been taken by the Government in this matter so far.

Ban on Import of Animal Products from Britain

4441. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that several countries in the World have banned the import of animal products originating from Britain due to mad cow disease (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy) defected there;

(b) if so, whether the Government have taken any precautionary measures in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) Yes, Sir. One of the major trading blocks viz. the European Union has imposed a ban on international sale of all meat products of British cattle.

(b) and (c). Yes, Sir. Import of tallow, fat/oils etc. of any animal origin are not permitted and have been classified as prohibited items in the Negative List of imports under the Export and Import Policy. In view of the incidence of *Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy* (BSE) in UK and other countries, government has taken further measures to restrict import of products/items so as to ensure that they originate only from healthy animals free from BSE.

Amendment in the Contempt of Court Act, 1971

4442. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to amend the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971 so as to allow criticism of judgements, judicial system and to make the system healthy and incorruptible;

(b) if so, the time by which such an amendment is expected to be introduced through a Bill in the Parliament; and

(c) if not, the other steps being taken to make the judicial system healthy and incorruptible?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The existing laws are sufficient to make the judicial system healthy and incorruptible.

EURO/GDR Issues

4443. SHRI RAM CHANDRA VEERAPPA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total receipts (in rupees as well as dollars) by Indian Companies from participation in Euro issues and GDRs flotation during the last three years;

(b) the average rate of interest attached to such issues;

(c) whether the realisation from Euro issues and GDRs are being increasingly used to retire domestic borrowing which bear a substantially higher rate of interest; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) The amount raised by Indian Companies through Euro Issues Global Depositary Receipt (GDR) and Foreign Currency Convertible Bonds (FCCBs) in dollars and rupee equivalent during the last three years have been as follows:

Years	Amount in US $ million	Equivalent in Rs. crores
1993-94	2500.00 + S.Fr.20 million	7868.00
1994-95	1991.63	6248.16
1995-96	616.25	2156.88

(b) In terms of the Euro issue Guidelines dated 19.6.96, the all-in costs for FCCBs should be significantly better than the corresponding debt instruments (ECBs). Interest rates on US dollars denominated FCCBs issued by Indian Companies have ragged between 2.25% to 7.8%.

(c) and (d). As per the Government of India guidelines dated 19.6.96 for Euro issues, the companies can utilise upto 25% of the Euro issue proceeds for general corporate restructuring including working capital requirements, which also covers retirement of high cost domestic borrowings.

Public Interest Petitions

4444. DR. VALLABH BHAI KATHIRIA:
SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VERMA:
SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the procedure for submitting a public interest petition and the basis on which it is admitted by the court;

(b) the number of public interest petitions received by various courts of the country during each of last three years; and

(c) the number of petitions admitted and judgements given by the courts on these petitions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, LEGILSATIVE DEPARTMENT AND